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Sent: 7/26/2012 7:40:35 AM

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CC:
Subject: Wall Street Journal (7-26) EPA Approves Town's Water After Fracking Fear

EPA Approves Town's Water After Fracking Fear

By TENNILLE TRACY

The Environmental Protection Agency has given the all-clear to drinking water in Dimock, Pa., a tiny town that received national attention after people there voiced concern about contamination from hydraulic fracturing. In a statement Wednesday, the EPA said it conducted sampling of drinking-water wells that served 64 homes and didn't find any contaminants that would require further action by the agency.

"Throughout EPA's work in Dimock, the agency has used the best available scientific data to provide clarity to Dimock residents and address their concerns about the safety of their drinking water," EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin said in a statement.

Dimock, featured in the documentary film "Gasland," has been a flash point in the broader debate over hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking," a process used to create seams in rocks and unlock the natural gas trapped inside. Public-health advocates and environmental groups have said the process is inherently risky and poses a risk to drinking water across the country.

The Dimock area had been the site of natural-gas drilling by Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. When the EPA first said earlier this year that it would look into possible contamination, Cabot said the agency's actions were politically motivated.

"Cabot's operations in Dimock have led to significant economic growth in the area, marked by a collaborative relationship with the local community," the company said in a statement Wednesday. "Cabot will continue to cooperate with federal, state and local officials in using the best and most accurate science to address public concerns."

In 2010, Cabot agreed to pay \$4.6 million to Pennsylvania regulators and 19 rural households whose drinking water was contaminated by the company's nearby natural-gas-drilling activities, according to state officials. The EPA didn't offer a view on whether Cabot's drilling may have caused contamination in years past. It said its findings were exclusively based on samples taken this year. Cabot has maintained that its drilling wasn't responsible for contamination.

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